



**Testimony  
Senate Committee on Government Operations  
House Bill 4714 as Reported by the Senate Workgroup  
July 30, 2013**

The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan, founded in 1948, is the only statewide non-profit organization that focuses entirely on seizure disorders. Our mission is to “lead the fight to stop seizures, find a cure, and overcome the challenges created by epilepsy”. The Foundation is a separately incorporated affiliate of the national Epilepsy Foundation.

The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan supports the Senate workgroup on the whole as we believe the acceptance of the federal funds already set aside to expand preventive and lifesaving health care under Medicaid will have a positive affect on the health of the Michigan population as well as a boost to our economy. It would help the people with epilepsy who have problems obtaining needed treatment, including access to mental health services, because they lack health insurance and the means to pay for it.

However, we do have concerns. Our major concern is access to medication under this legislation. Treating epilepsy can be difficult as people do not respond to the same drugs in the same way, and there may be absorption differences between generics and between brand and generic. We are also concerned that the language in the bill as presented could be interpreted to allow therapeutic substitution.

We believe the Medicaid program should take into consideration the special needs of people with epilepsy and other chronic health problems when it comes to medication. Getting and keeping people on medications that work for them will prevent hospitalization and adverse effects while maintaining a better quality of life. Incentives need to be written that recognize that fact.

Thank you.

Arlene S. Gorelick, MPH  
President